



Understanding and Preventing Conflict

CSO helps the U.S. Government Anticipate, Prevent, and Respond to Conflict.

CSO helps embassies and diplomats to visualize, understand, and stabilize conflict. Drawing from multiple disciplines and using conflict prevention tools and field-driven, evidence-based analysis, CSO develops and supports strategies to help the Department and U.S. embassies protect civilians and stabilize communities in conflict.

- **Focus on Prevention:** CSO focuses on the prevention of violence against civilians that can create instability, scanning the horizon to identify potential problems upstream. CSO frequently works where tensions are just surfacing, in addition to conflicts that are in more advanced stages.
- **Atrocities:** CSO works with the Atrocities Prevention Board (APB) and interagency to scan the horizon for atrocity risks and identify interventions that can change the incentives for potential perpetrators of mass violence. CSO develops tools and training to identify and address atrocity triggers.
- **Violent Extremism:** CSO works to prevent violent extremism by studying the drivers of violent extremism to equip policy-makers with new insights and possible solutions. For example, the CSO-supported RESOLVE network of international researchers studies how communities can and do resist extremist ideology.
- **Focus on Analysis:** CSO applies conflict analysis and operational insights to shape U.S. policy. The bureau researches and analyzes factors that contribute to conflict, determines effective measures to prevent violence, and captures those lessons for policymakers. CSO uses real-time monitoring and evaluations to measure ongoing impact and gather best practices.
- **Focus on Planning:** CSO develops diplomatic strategies and contingency plans to anticipate windows of opportunity for diplomatic and programmatic conflict prevention activities, as well as to identify potential risk factors for atrocities, violent extremism and other security challenges, and develop strategic plans to target these risks, in coordination with other USG stakeholders, donors and the host nations.
- **Focus on Partnership:** CSO partners closely with USAID and the Department of Defense. In addition, the bureau collaborates with bilateral and multilateral partners, non-governmental organizations, think tanks, and

academia. CSO co-founded the Stability Leaders Forum (SLF), a platform for sharing knowledge and cooperation with the stability units of eight like-minded governments. CSO also works closely with the EU, UN and AU.

CSO staff support the Department and U.S. embassies with targeted analysis, planning, and programming. They also advise on policy and coordinate interagency mechanisms.

Highlights of CSO Work around the World

- ***DRC***: CSO has sent staff to Katanga Province intermittently to evaluate and monitor violence risks, and to help the U.S. embassy anticipate and respond to potential conflict during the 2016 electoral period.
- ***Yemen***: Supports efforts for a UN-negotiated political agreement through mapping security sector actors, analyzing local conflict dynamics and developing security sector reform strategies. Provides early warning and early response to future atrocity risks.
- ***Burma***: CSO personnel located at the U.S. embassy in Rangoon analyze drivers of intercommunal conflict across the country and assess the risk of violence and atrocities, with a focus on Rakhine State.
- ***Colombia***: CSO is working to design an early warning mechanism to support implementation of comprehensive peace accords signed between the Colombian government and FARC guerrillas, who have been engaged in conflict for over half a century.
- ***East Africa***: Conducted analysis on violent extremism trends in East Africa in support of the Counterterrorism Partnership Fund (CTPF) initiative and led an interagency assessment mission to the region to inform the design of Department and USAID programs; created a Regional Support Team with personnel at U.S. Embassies across the region providing analysis and evaluation of programs.